

## PREFACE

As early as the 18th century, interest in the Roman military sites along the Lower Germanic Limes began to grow – initially primarily as a treasure hunt, for example in Bonn, the “Rhenish Pompeii”, or in Xanten. At the beginning of the 19th century, scholarly engagement with the Roman imperial border began. On the initiative of Theodor Mommsen, the Imperial Limes Commission (“Reichs-limeskommission”) was established, leading to the systematic research and publication of Roman relics along the Upper Germanic-Rhaetian Limes in southwestern Germany between 1890 and 1935. However, Mommsen’s efforts to bring also the Lower Germanic Limes under the jurisdiction of the Imperial Limes Commission failed due to the political conditions of the time. Therefore, to this day, there is no comparable study and publication for the sites along the Lower Germanic Limes.

Intensive scientific excavations at the legionary sites along the Rhine began in the last quarter of the 19th century. Starting in 1876, Ernst aus’m Weerth, the first director of the “Rheinisches Landesmuseum” (then still called the “Rheinisches Provinzialmuseum”), and Major General Karl von Veith initiated extensive excavations in the area of the Bonn legionary camp. Just a year later, Constantin Koenen began uncovering the Neuss legionary camp. From 1905 onward, Hans Lehner, the third director of the “Rheinisches Provinzialmuseum” in Bonn, led the excavations at the legionary camp *Vetera I* near Xanten.

Following this initial, almost euphoric phase of uncovering legionary camps in Germany, research came to a standstill during the Nazi era. Intensive investigations were not resumed until the 1970s, largely due to Harald von Petrikovits, who served as director of the “Rheinisches Landesmuseum” in Bonn from 1958 to 1973. His period of influence saw extensive excavations at the legionary site in Neuss as well as several large-scale excavation projects in the Bonn legionary camp. This intensive research activity gave the archaeology of Roman provinces a significant boost, but it was not sustained and was almost entirely discontinued in the early 1980s. Many materials and excavation records remained unprocessed in storage facilities and archives.

Since the early 2000s, a network has been established in the Rhineland with the goal of once again making the study of military sites along the Lower Germanic Limes a central focus of archaeological research. The main actors in this effort include the LVR-Office for Monument Preservation in the Rhineland (“LVR-Amt für Bodendenkmalpflege im Rheinland”), the LVR-Landesmuseum Bonn, the Department of Prehistoric and Early Historic Archaeology at the University of Bonn, the LVR-Archaeological Park in Xanten, and the chair of Archaeology of the Roman Provinces at the University of Cologne.

The central motivation was the preparation of an application for the inclusion of the Lower Germanic Limes on the UNESCO World Heritage List, a task led by the LVR-Office for Monument Preservation in the Rhineland. As a preliminary step for this application, the project “Inventory of the Lower Germanic Limes” was carried out, which was largely funded by the Ministry of Homeland, Municipal Affairs, Building, and Digitalization of the State of North Rhine-Westphalia.

In July 2021, these long-standing efforts were rewarded with the official inclusion of the Lower Germanic Limes on the UNESCO World Heritage List. However, the question of how to handle the numerous older excavations remains unresolved. Initial considerations on this issue were developed as early as 2005. From the 2010s onward, the LVR-Landesmuseum Bonn undertook an intensive effort to catalog key excavations from the Bonn legionary camp, laying the foundation for their scholarly analysis.

These preliminary efforts and discussions culminated in 2018 in the submission of the project proposal “Limes and Legion: The Effectiveness of Roman Military Presence on the Lower Germanic Limes. Edition and Interpretation of Archaeological Sources” by the Department of Prehistoric and Early Historic Archaeology at the University of Bonn, in collaboration with the LVR-Landesmuseum Bonn and the Ludwig-Maximilians-University of Munich, and in cooperation with Radboud University Nijmegen, at the North Rhine-Westphalian Academy of Sciences and Arts. The project was officially approved in 2022.

With a duration of 18 years (2022–2039), the project offers, for the first time since research on the legionary



Fig. 1. Map of the sites discussed in the present volume. Blue: early Roman military camps mentioned in the introductory contribution by Michel Reddé. 1 *Noviomagus*/Nijmegen; 2 *Vetera*/Xanten; 3 Haltern; 4 Oberaden; 5 Anreppen; 6 *Novaesium*/Neuss; 7 *Bonna*/Bonn; 8 Limburg a. d. Lahn; 9 Greifenberg near Limburg; 10 Rödgen; 11 La Chaussée-Tirancourt; 12 *Mogontiacum*/Mainz; 13 Vendeuil-Caply; 14 Petrisberg near Trier; 15 Hermeskeil; 16 Marktbreit; 17 Berry-au-Bac; 18 Mauchamp; 19 Faux-Vésigneul; 20 *Castra Regina*/Regensburg; 21 Mušov; 22 Oedenburg; 23 *Lauriacum*/Enns; 24 Albing; 25 *Vindobona*/Vienna; 26 *Bibracte*; 27 *Vindonissa*/Windisch; 28 Ločica; 29 *Poetovio*/Ptuj; 30 *Gergovia*; 31 Lautagne near Valence; 32 León; 33 *Novae*; 34 Renieblas; 35 *Numantia*; 36 Almazán; 37 Cáceres el Viejo; 38 *Hegra* (Graphic: Christoph Duntze, LVR-Landesmuseum Bonn).

sites began, the opportunity to comprehensively and comparatively edit and analyze a large portion of the numerous historical and older excavations according to modern standards. Throughout the project, in-depth research questions will emerge from the analyzed material, structured around five major thematic fields: construction

and chronology, cultural impact, spatial effect, historical processes, and frontier development.

The inaugural conference, “From Germania inferior to Arabia Petraea – New Perspectives on Roman Legionary Camps”, held on May 11–12, 2023, at the LVR-Landesmuseum Bonn, brought together scholars from numer-



Fig. 2. Participants of the 2023 conference at Bonn (Photo: Jürgen Vogel, LVR-Landesmuseum).

ous regions of the former Roman Empire (Fig. 2). The goal was to gain a comprehensive overview of current research and key questions concerning legionary camps while fostering collegial exchange and learning from each other's work.

Covering a broad geographical and chronological spectrum – from Spain in the west, Syria and Saudi Arabia in the east, and Nijmegen in the north (Fig. 1), from the Augustan period through Late Antiquity – the conference offered a nuanced and comprehensive perspective on the appearance, function, and military and societal integration of the legionary camps.

At the same time, it became apparent that the lack of published editions of excavation records is not just a problem for legionary sites along the Lower Germanic Limes but a broader issue across the Roman world. The editors are extremely grateful to the speakers and, in particular, to the authors for their contributions! Unfortunately, not all conference participants were able to submit their papers for publication due to various reasons. For the sake of completeness, they are listed here along with our sincere thanks for their participation in the conference:

- Steve Bödecker, *Vetera castra. A new plan for the 'Old Camp'*
- Christian Gugl/Mario Wallner, *Militär an Statthalter-sitzen – der Fall Carnuntum*

- Domagoj Tončinić, *Tilurium*
- Joško Zaninović, *Burnum*
- Felix Marcu/Anca Timofan/George Cupcea, *Recent research on the legionary camp of Apulum, Dacia*
- Moheddine Chaouali, *The daily life of soldiers in the Numidian marble quarries of Simitthus in Africa Proconsularis (Tunisia) between the 1st and 3rd centuries AD J.-C.*
- Markus Gschwind, *Raphanea – Ein Legionslager der frühen und mittleren Kaiserzeit in der Provinz Syria*

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